



# COASTAL AMERICA UPDATE

Winter Issue

2012

## Adventure Aquarium & NJAAS Welcomed as Newest Partnership Member

The [Adventure Aquarium](#) & [New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences](#) (NJAAS) was recently designated as the newest Coastal America Learning Center (CELCLC). The CELC Network is a collaboration between Federal and non-Federal organizations committed to working together to educate and involve the public in protecting our nation's coastal and marine ecosystems, as well as addressing our nation's top coastal and marine issues. During the designation ceremony held on Tuesday November 15th, designating official Monica Medina, Principal Deputy Undersecretary for Oceans and Atmosphere of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration joined Adventure Aquarium Executive Director Kevin Keppel and President of NJAAS Brian Duvall in signing the Memorandum of Understanding that officially made the Aquarium a part of the Coastal America Partnership.

The Adventure Aquarium is one of the mid-Atlantic's premiere aquariums, housing 200,000 square feet of public space, over 2 million gallons of water and 431 species. There are touch exhibits, research



*The Adventure Aquarium and NJAAS building overlooks the Delaware River*



*Kevin Keppel, Monica Medina and Brian Duvall recognize the Adventure Aquarium & NJAAS as the 24th Coastal America Learning Center network partner*

labs, classrooms, meeting areas and a 4-D theater, as well as seal and penguin outdoor exhibits. The Aquarium and the Academy serve over 800,000 visitors annually and draw well over 300,000 participants to a wide variety of shows, movies, lessons, tours and field programs.

As a CELC, the Adventure Aquarium and NJAAS will focus on educating their visitors about the nature and value of coastal resources. They will join an international network of marine educational institutions that are addressing our growing coastal problems by creating a better informed public. Recognizing that access to science and environmental content is the right of every citizen, the aquarium takes special pride in offering a rich and culturally relevant environmental program for

underserved urban audiences in the Camden/Philadelphia region.

During the ceremony, members of the federal family, the Coastal America Mid-Atlantic Regional Implementation Team, the New Jersey [Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership](#) (CWRP) and various nongovernmental organizations shared their commitments to the Aquarium in support of the Partnership and efforts to protect, preserve and restore our nation's coasts. Commitments included time aboard research vessels, educational materials and hands-on learning tools for the classroom, guest speakers for special events and expertise in the development of exhibits and displays. Visit [www.coastalamerica.gov](http://www.coastalamerica.gov) for a detailed list of commitments from both our federal and non-federal partners.

## Partnership Award Winners Announced

Since 1997, the Coastal America Awards Program has recognized outstanding collaborative projects and excellence in leadership for protecting, preserving and restoring the nation's coastal resources. As always, nominations are carefully reviewed by an interagency committee and approved by political leadership representing the Obama Administration. Selection criteria require that successful projects include at least one federal agency partner as well as one non-federal entity, clearly demonstrate the "value added" of the partnership effort, reflect an innovative or unique way of accomplishing stated goals and objectives with positive environmental results, and contribute to the accomplishment of Coastal America's objectives to restore and protect resources and to increase public awareness of the coastal and marine environment. Congratulations to the 2011 Award winners!

### **Stonybrook Marsh Restoration Project – Brewster, MA**

This coastal watershed restoration project includes several compo-



*Foot bridges added to marsh trail to increase tidal flow at Stonybrook Marsh*

nents; two separate salt marsh restoration sites to restore a total of 41 acres of salt marsh; two separate fish passage improvement projects to restore diadromous fish passage to 386 acres of spawning and nursery habitat for endangered river herring and American eels; removal of a beach parking lot suffering from coastal erosion and restoration of the barrier beach; and remediation of stormwater discharges throughout the watershed in order to improve water quality for shellfish, fish and wildlife. Restoration work involved feasibility assessments, planning, fundraising, permitting, construction, monitoring, and outreach.

### **Long Beach Wetlands Restoration Project – Stamford, CT**

This project took two years and was completed on April 15, 2011. A total of 37 cottages, 25 outbuildings, 4 docks, retaining walls, debris, and trash including hazardous materials, which consisted of lead, asbestos, and PCBs were removed on 35 acres. A significant amount of the debris was also recycled. Habitat was improved for federally- and state-listed species and the project also improved public access, aesthetics and safety issues at the site.

### **Lincoln Park Wetlands Restoration Project – Morris County, NJ**

The project unites and synchronizes landfill closure, site remediation, beneficial re-use of federal navigational dredge material, public health and safety, wetland and habitat restoration, regional recreation for bikers, hikers and paddlers, migratory fish passage, and public awareness and education regarding coastal issues. The final completed vision for Lincoln Park included the creation of 42 acres of new wildlife habitat, including tidal low marsh, open water/mud flat, tidal high marsh,

scrub shrub and additional pedestrian pathways and bridges.



*Volunteers collect research data at the Lincoln Park wetland area*

### **Gulf of Mexico Community Based Restoration Project (GCRP) — TX**

The purpose of the partnership is to strengthen conservation efforts by supporting on-the-ground projects to restore coastal marine habitats, benefit living marine resources, and foster local stewardship of the sites. To date, the GCRP has funded more than 75 community-based restoration projects. In total more than \$3 million has been funded towards these restoration projects, of which an additional \$5.5 million has been leveraged in matching contributions from project partners. This match includes nearly 50,000 contributed volunteer hours. In total, more than 15,000 acres of coastal habitat have been restored as part of these partnership projects.

### **Ocean Science Program – Seattle Aquarium – WA**

The Ocean Science program, an ongoing five-year partnership between Seattle Aquarium and the NOAA Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary catalyzes change in K-12 science education, integrating Ocean Literacy principles with inquiry based classroom curriculum and experiential learning experiences at local beaches.



## AWARDS, continued

Ocean Science focuses on two target audiences, students in grades 4-5 from the greater Puget Sound area and the underserved rural communities along the outer coast of Washington. The program sponsors four basic components; teacher in-service workshops and follow up training and support; parent and chaperone training; classroom beach box curriculum; and two field trips to Seattle Aquarium or a marine science center and a local beach. This four-part approach supports content training in marine ecosystems, ocean conservation, and nearshore field investigations, as well as pedagogical models for teaching inquiry science.



*Educators study a beach seine catch in a joint NOAA-Seattle Aquarium project*

### Middle Watsonville Slough Partnership – Watsonville, CA

Over the last 4 years, the partnership has acquired 490 acres within the slough complex and has initiated numerous restoration projects that will improve water quality and habitats for federally-listed species, as well as many resident and migratory bird species along the Pacific Flyway; all while demonstrating sustainable farming practices in the region. The partnership has improved water quality, and habitat for coastal species while simultaneously maintaining the agricultural heritage and economic viability of the community of the Monterey Bay region.

## Steve Coan and Chris Darnell Honored with Coastal America's National Leadership Awards

On September 15, Coastal America was proud to present our Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center (CELC) Leadership Award to Dr. Stephen Coan, President and CEO of Sea Research Foundation and Mystic Aquarium at the annual meeting of the Learning Center directors in Atlanta, GA. The award is bestowed on a CELC representative who has made an extraordinary contribution to the Coastal America Partnership. Dr. Coan generously donated the time and expertise of the JASON Project's (a Sea Research Foundation endeavor) videography team in producing our first ever webcast from the Coastal America Student Summit, greatly expanding the reach and impact of the Summit. He took that contribution a step further, bringing the JASON team to Coastal Zone 2011 (CZ11), where, with the assistance of the Coastal America National Coordinating Office, they produced and streamed a nationwide webcast on ocean issues and the new National Ocean Policy. A first for the Coastal Zone conferences, the webcast capitalized on the wealth



*Virginia Tippie, Director of Coastal America & Tom Schmid, President of Texas State Aquarium present the Leadership Award to Dr. Coan*



*Chris Darnell, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, receives the Leadership Award from Virginia Tippie & Alan Thornhill, Dept. of Interior*



### 2011 Special Recognition Award

#### Restore America's Estuaries

Founded in 1995 as a 501(c)3 alliance specifically dedicated to restoring and protecting coastal habitats, Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) unites community, corporate, governmental and nongovernmental organizations at the national, state and local levels to build partnerships and secure resources to restore and preserve estuarine habitats. Eleven disparate non-profit organizations came together to address the need for more on-the-ground coastal habitat restoration. RAE links these organizations, leverages precious financial and technical resources across the member organizations, and works on the national level to empower their groups to increase the pace and scale of their restoration efforts. RAE supports on-the-ground community-based restoration projects, creates tools and resources to guide the restoration process and engages and unifies key stakeholders in a biennial national conference and through local outreach efforts.

## LEADERSHIP, continued

of expertise concentrated at the conference, with appearances from government officials and private sector coastal practitioners. Students from three Summit delegations also traveled to the CZ11 conference in Chicago, to participate in this unique webcast and discuss how they are helping to protect our coasts and ocean. Coastal America's successful partnering with the JASON team has also helped jumpstart our social media presence.

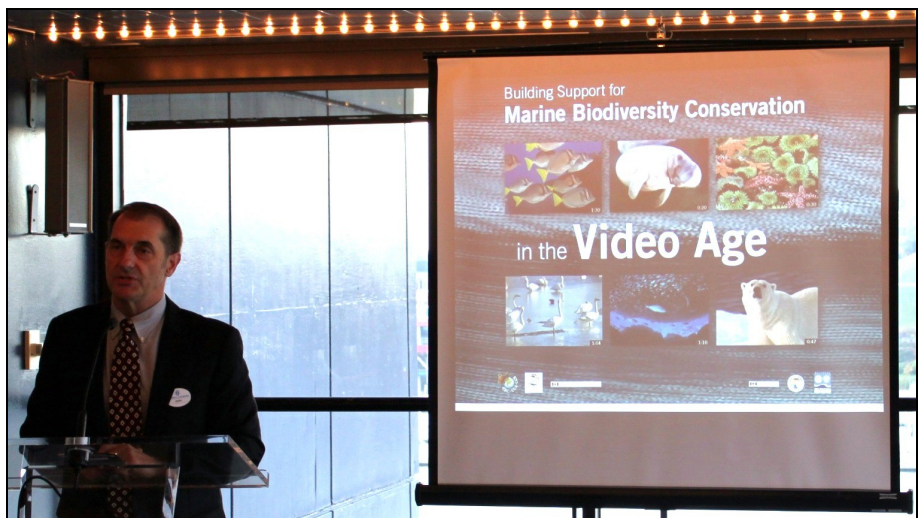
On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, at Coastal Zone 2011, Coastal America proudly bestowed our National Leadership Award on Chris Darnell. Chris, who is US Fish & Wildlife Service's national representative to the Partnership's National Implementation Team was presented his award by Virginia Tippie, Director of Coastal America and by Alan Thornhill, Science Advisor to the Director of the Department of Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement and Interior's representative to the Ocean Resource Management Interagency Policy Committee. Recognized for his leadership in engaging the Partnership in the Regional Ecosystem Protection and Restoration Strategic Action Plan (SAP) development, Chris has worked tirelessly to ensure that this SAP would make the most effective use possible of the unique resources that the Partnership can bring to achieving the goals of the National Ocean Policy.

## North American Marine Protected Area Network/ CELC Outreach and Film Workshop

This year's Halloween treat for representatives of ten of our Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers (CELCs) was an opportunity to meet with officials from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. who are part of the [North American Marine Protected Area Network](#) (NAMPAN). Sponsored and organized by the trilateral Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), NAMPAN and Coastal America's National Coordinating Office helped facilitate the two day workshop at the National Aquarium on October 31 and November 1. The goal of the gathering was to increase public support for existing and future Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). The method was group developed themes, core messages and stories for a series of 5 short, attractive videos. Diving right into the task, the three dozen attendees worked steadily for two days, both as a single larger group and in smaller break-out groups, to create the storylines for the 5 videos.

The videos will actually be created

by production teams from Aquarium of the Pacific, Mystic Aquarium, Shedd Aquarium and Vancouver Aquarium. NOAA's [Ocean Today Kiosk](#) (OTK) team will coordinate the production. All of the videos will be completed in the spring of 2012, with multi-location premieres planned for Ocean Week in June! While the primary target for the videos is the OTK, videos will also be shown at the CELC theatres. The project has also gained the backing of a private company that has volunteered to turn the overview video into a 4-D product, for use at 4-D theaters. Participants also focused some of the conversation on how social media could be used to further the reach of the videos. While the most direct result of this gathering will be the creation of these consciousness-raising videos, a longer-term benefit may very well be the start of new international collaborative relationships that can benefit not only conservation, marine protected areas, and the coast and ocean, but the CELC network as well.



*John Racanelli, CEO of the National Aquarium in Baltimore welcomes guests to the joint NAMPAN-CELC workshop*



# NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

## NORTHWEST

In August of 2011, the [Oregon Coast Aquarium](#) and [Hatfield Marine Science Center](#) along with [Oregon Sea Grant](#) and the Lincoln County School District co-hosted Lincoln County's first K-12 Ocean Literacy Symposiums in Newport, OR. These partners are collaborating to improve Lincoln County students' ocean literacy by increasing teacher and student's access to the vast ocean related resources available through local marine and coastal agencies. The Symposium included a district-wide in-service day for all licensed teachers and administrators in Lincoln County. Participants learned new strategies for teaching marine science to inspire students and help them meet state standards. Teachers explored the mud flats and learned new ways to engage students in math and science.

Oregon Sea Grant recently received the largest single research award in its 40-year history. The five-year, \$2.6 million grant from the [National Science Foundation](#) will help support the creation of a free-choice learning lab at Oregon State University's Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport, OR. To learn more, please visit <http://oregonstate.edu/ua/ncs/archives/2011/oct/oregon-sea-grant-receives-26-million-nsf-grant-learning-research>.

The **Nisqually Estuary Restoration Team** received national accolades for outstanding efforts to restore and protect the coastal environment as a recipient of the Coastal America Partnership Award on December 10, 2011 in Olympia, WA. The 15-year long project was led by a partnership of federal, state, tribal, non-profit,

local scientists and officials who worked together to return the Nisqually Delta to a more ecologically productive state. A one-mile long boardwalk trail allows visitors to explore the delta, view wildlife and observe the estuary.

Officials from the U.S. Department of Interior, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Nisqually Indian Tribe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Ducks Unlimited, and the Nisqually River Council were in attendance, as were representatives of all 17 partners on the team. Mr. Tom Eaton, EPA Region 10 Director of the Washington Operations Office served as the awarding official. The team was also recognized by Oregon Congressional Representatives Norman D. Dicks (6<sup>th</sup> District) and Adam Smith (9<sup>th</sup> District). The Nisqually Delta effort is the largest estuary restoration project in the Pacific Northwest to date, with the goal of recovery of Puget Sound salmon and other critical wildlife populations.



*Site tour of the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge with Manager Jean Takakawa*

The student delegates who participated in the 2011 Student Summit concluded their training with the [Monterey Bay Aquarium](#) WATCH



*Monterey Bay Aquarium student volunteers inspire young visitors*

Program in the spring and have since focused on their roles as mentors to others. On November 12<sup>th</sup>, the WATCH Alumni from the Monterey Bay Aquarium helped host the aquarium's "ONE Teen Summit." The summit theme was "Oceans Need Everyone." The goal was to gather together students interested in promoting ocean conservation in their communities and help them take their projects to the next level. Over one hundred students from 13 different schools around California gathered to share ideas, build skills and network on conservation projects. The event included workshops on marketing projects, developing a media strategy and using technology to spread the message. The Summit culminated with an evening of student presentations, a guest speaker who discussed the global issue of marine debris and a sleep-over at the aquarium.

At the [Aquarium of the Pacific](#), (AOP) the Student Summit delegates from the Marine Science Academy continue to implement their action plan by helping guests understand that their individual actions have consequences, using the Climate Change Game that they created in preparation for the 2011 Student Summit.



AOP Education Specialist Alicia Archer demonstrates the "green screen"

## NORTHWEST, continued

In October, AOP launched their new Roddenberry Education video-conferencing studio, equipped with state-of-the-art green screen technology that allows the education department to seamlessly transition between program visuals and educator-led discussion. Since its launch, the studio has served over 300 students from California, Texas, Pennsylvania, Louisiana and Ohio. In addition to this school audience, they have also connected to an assisted living senior center in Ohio.

AOP was recently awarded the Boeing Crystal Vision Award to support growth in their Whale Watch program. The \$50,000 award will provide the education department with mapping software to track and document whales that have already been photo-identified, to improve understanding of their habits.

## GULF OF MEXICO

With issues of deep concern shared by all parties around the Gulf of Mexico (GoM), the seven **GoM Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers (CELCs-GoM)** are working collaboratively to develop region-specific, interactive kiosk content that will address issues that are of particular relevance to

residents of the Gulf.

With two complementary grants from EPA and NOAA Office of Education, work is well underway to develop interesting and accurate regional content. A Gulf of Mexico relief map will form the backbone of the kiosk displays, which will include an audio dome and interactive monitors, as well as site-specific iconic identification. The **Aquario de Veracruz** developed and constructed the prototype kiosk to help establish content, images and branding. The GoM kiosks will offer multiple short (2 minute) video choices, along with 1 minute public service announcements. GoM kiosks will continue to offer the formal national Ocean Today Kiosk (OTK) content, particularly when related to Gulf issues. However the Gulf CELCs will also produce their own region-specific information on the following themes:

- Reduction of nutrients and their impacts
- Improved water quality
- Increased coastal resilience
- Augmented habitat identification and characterization
- Enhanced environmental education, and
- Coordinated ecosystem integration and assessment

With funding provided by NOAA's Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Ob-



Panel of speakers at inauguration ceremony for the bi-national Coastal and Marine Monitoring Satellite Network

serving System, partners are developing an interactive education game for visitors, utilizing real-time data from NOAA's Integrated Ocean Observation System. With 3 million guests visiting the CELCs in the Gulf region annually, the GoM kiosk network offers impressive potential to educate and inspire a sizable portion of the population in the Gulf of Mexico. All 7 kiosks and interactive games should be installed and running by the end of 2012.

A separate five-year effort by the **CELCs-GoM**—jointly funded by NOAA's Office of Education and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums—is also underway to gauge public understanding of climate change. This project will assess the impact of a variety of tools—including exhibits, interactive games, special events and festivals, educator workshops and opportunities to interact with climate scientists—on public perceptions of climate change. The surveys will help determine what actions the public might be willing to take, including personal behavioral changes, to help mitigate climate change. Resulting conclusions will help the Coastal America Partnership's Learning Center Network hone its messages to better communicate climate change and community resilience issues.

On November 14, Mr. Anselmo Estandía Colom, President of the **Acuario de Veracruz** welcomed guests to the *Coastal and Marine Monitoring Satellite Network* inauguration ceremony. Bryon Griffith, former Director of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Gulf of Mexico Program and longtime Coastal America Gulf of Mexico Regional Chair discussed projects that have been carried out in conjunction with the Acuario de Veracruz, the Mexico Ministry of



## GULF OF MEXICO, continued

Health and the Institute of Ecology (INECOL). Mr. Griffith also presented the “Guardian of the Gulf Award” to the State Government of Veracruz and the Aquario de Veracruz for their partnership efforts in the project, “Detecting Red Tide on the Veracruz Coasts.”



*Bryon Griffith, EPA, discusses the effects of Red Tide on the Veracruz Coast at the Aquarium of Veracruz*

The **Texas State Aquarium** recently completed an update to its *Flower Garden Banks* coral reef exhibit, with support from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and NOAA’s Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary. The Texas State Aquarium also received a \$47,995 award from NOAA’s John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program to improve and upgrade the Aquarium’s marine mammal rehabilitation facilities. Improvements include new life support systems, a saltwater makeup system, and the ability to provide longer term care for patients if needed.

The Aquarium recently received a service-learning grant from the State Farm Youth Advisory Board that allows students from Moody High School in Corpus Christi to continue to implement their Coastal America Student Summit project to construct and rebuild oyster habitats with recycled

shells. The “South Texas Oyster Restoration and Awareness Project” engages students in existing outreach efforts spearheaded by the Harte Research Institute (HRI)/ Texas A&M University– Corpus Christi. With funding from the Texas General Land Office, HRI started the “Sink Your Shucks” program to recruit local restaurants to recycle oyster shells, which are then used to build new oyster reefs.



*Getting ready for oyster awareness and restoration outreach in South TX*

On Saturday, December 3, **Dauphin Island Sea Lab**, in partnership with Auburn High School and the Southern Environmental Center at Birmingham Southern College hosted a free Community Forum on the Deepwater Horizon Event. Forum participants heard from experts on ongoing oil spill research topics such as short and long term effects of oil pollution on marine mammals and fisheries. The interactive forum was viewed

by audiences at all three locations and networked via video-conferencing technology. During a panel discussion and Q & A period, the audience asked questions of scientists at each location. Power-Point presentations from the experts and a replay of the event are available at [http://cosee-central-gom.org/community\\_forum\\_al.htm](http://cosee-central-gom.org/community_forum_al.htm).

The Mississippi Marine Debris Removal and Prevention Project, supported by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, in cooperation with the **J.L. Scott Marine Education Center/Gulf Coast Research Lab**, is an effort to increase awareness of marine debris impact on coastal ecosystems and foster improved stewardship of coastal habitats. This project is taking place on Deer Island, south of Biloxi, MS over a three year period, with four designated clean-up sites along the island. It is creating an educated cadre of citizens who can help others understand the importance of marine debris prevention. The first two-day marine debris workshop was held in July 2011 when over 420 lbs of trash was collected.

## SOUTHEAST

The **Florida Aquarium** recently received a \$2.5-million leadership gift from The Mosaic Company to create an education, conference and event facility—The Mosaic



*Projected design of the new Mosaic Center at the Florida Aquarium*

## SOUTHEAST, continued

Center—as part of the Aquarium's new "Rising Tides Campaign." Groundbreaking for the Aquarium expansion is slated for September 2012 with sequenced and consecutive construction projects to be underway for four years.

The **Florida Aquarium's** Education Department received a grant from **The Ocean Project** <http://theoceanproject.org/> for their "Instilling a Lifelong Conservation Ethic in Middle School Students Initiative." The teachers will incorporate lessons learned during the climate change professional workshops into student-lead conservation projects that focus on local concerns. A specially designed program will then match teachers to Aquarium education staff throughout the 2011-2012 school year to provide regular feedback on student activities.

Over the past several months, the **IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame and Museum** has teamed up with corporate partner Mercury Marine and the United Pier and Shore Anglers of California to bring a series of free fishing clinics to families in Florida and California. These clinics



*New anglers happily apply the skills they learned in IGFA fishing clinics*

ics and tournaments are held at the IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame & Museum in Dania Beach, Florida as well as public fishing piers throughout California. The festival-like clinics not only teach families how to fish and have fun, but also share information that teaches them to be better stewards of their environment. For more information please visit <http://igfa.org/Educate/main.aspx>.

**Georgia Aquarium** recently launched a new national educational TV series on ABC stations. "Ocean Mysteries with Jeff Corwin" is one of six weekly educational programs which form the new "Litton Weekend Adventure" block of programming. Accompanied by experts from Georgia Aquarium, Emmy Award-winning animal expert Jeff Corwin uncovers the se-

cret world of aquatic environments. Created specifically for learning and featuring 22 original episodes in season 1, the show is a great resource for teachers. It is the Aquarium's hope that teachers will use "Ocean Mysteries" series and its curriculum to enhance learning and inspire interest in caring for and conserving aquatic animals around the world.



*Georgia Aquarium launches a new TV series on ABC*

The **Georgia CWRP** is hard at work to become an active partner in an established EPA effort, the Five Star Restoration Program. Five Star brings youth, government agencies, landowners and the private sector together to provide environmental education through wet lands restoration projects. Though EPA funding levels are modest, when combined with partner donations, the projects make meaningful contributions to their communities. The GA CWRP is offering advisory support and other

## Film Premiere of 'We Sea Change' at North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher



*NC Aquarium delegates discuss film*

The Coastal America Student Summit delegates from the **North Carolina Aquarium** premiered their film; "We Sea Change, a Student's Perspective on Climate and a Changing World" on Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at the Aquarium, while also streaming it live on the **Smithsonian Ocean Portal**. Following the premiere of the film, the students hosted a panel discussion on the making of the film and climate related issues. If you missed the event, visit Coastal America's YouTube Channel, accessible via [www.coastalamerica.gov](http://www.coastalamerica.gov) to see the film and download the accompanying curriculum guide. Created as a learning tool for students the film focuses on climate change, impacts on the coastal Carolina region and how people can be part of the solution to climate change. The film is also available for download on iTunes.



## Coastal America Partnership Award

On June 29, The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and 12 other national, state and local partners received a Coastal America Partnership Award for outstanding efforts and excellence in leadership for protecting, preserving and restoring the nation's coastal resources and ecosystems.

They received the award for work restoring fish passage on the Peconic River in Riverhead, NY. EPA and NOAA assisted in efforts to replace a dam with a rock ramp fishway in Grangebel Park in Riverhead, which will help return alewife and American eels to their historic habitat and spawning areas on the Peconic River.

"Protecting the health of the Peconic Estuary – and the species that live there – is a priority for EPA. This fish passage project has turned a stretch of the Pe-



*Members of the Peconic Estuary Restoration Team at award ceremony*

conic River back into the important fish habitat it once was," said EPA Regional Administrator Judith Enck. Currently Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce Eric Schwab was the awarding official. Alewives and eels are critical parts of the estuarine food web as important prey species of predatory fish and birds and as food and as bait fish for commercial and recreational fisheries. Project partners include the Peconic Estuary Program, which EPA and Suffolk County manage, the Peconic River

Fish Restoration Commission, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Town of Riverhead, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Suffolk County, American Rivers, the FishAmerica Foundation, the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, the New York CWRP, National Guard and [Spectra Energy](#).

in-kind assistance to applicants during EPA's grant application process, with the potential for continued support during the implementation phases of projects that win EPA approval.

In Florida, the **Card Sound Road Environmental Restoration Team** received a Coastal America Partnership award in September 2011 for their efforts to clean up and improve important habitat. The team successfully recovered a valuable two square-mile area of high-quality coastal waters and wetlands surrounding a stretch of Card Sound Road near the Miami-Dade and Monroe County line. The award was presented at the Board of County Commissioners Chambers in downtown Miami on Wednesday, September 14, 2011.

The Card Sound Road area, despite being part of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve, suffered from illegal and unsafe construction in and adjacent to the public right-of-way, discharges of sewage and other pollutants to public land and water, solid waste dumping, unauthorized dredging and filling, abandonment of boats



*The Card Sound Road Environmental Restoration Team receives a Coastal America Partnership Award*

and fishing gear, and illegal fishing practices. These activities threatened not only water quality and wildlife, but also represented a risk to human health and safety and precluded lawful use of public waters by responsible boaters and other recreationists.

### MID-ATLANTIC

The **New Jersey CWRP** chapter has been busy cooperating with partners on a number of restoration projects including a large multifaceted dam spillway project. The recent decline of the American eel in North America is a cause for concern among fishermen, scientists and environmentalists. The purpose of the "Glass Eel and Elver Passage Engineering on Existing Dams" project is to provide

## MID-ATLANTIC, continued

passage for American eel elvers over three dam spillways in southern New Jersey. With the goal of creating easily-transferable solutions, the project team is developing low technology methods that could potentially be retrofitted to help create fish passage on other small dams elsewhere along the east coast. This NJ CWRP project includes a monitoring component that will evaluate effectiveness of the new eel passages.

Lake edge was restored to improve stormwater control at Branch Brook Park, in Essex County, NJ. With support from **NJ CWRP**, this effort reestablished natural stormwater controls to improve the functioning of an urban ecosystem that feeds into the Lower Passaic River. To further restore the ecosystem, NJ CWRP is providing an invasive species expert who will develop a plan for removal of the invasive species and reestablishment of native species. The project also incorporates educational opportunities for Newark, NJ schools.

The **NJ CWRP** is also helping to restore approximately 1.5 miles of historic herring spawning and nursery habitat to the Lower Musconetcong River in Warren and Hunter-



*Removal of the Riegelsville Dam*

don counties, NJ. The removal of the Riegelsville Dam, a remnant timber crib foundation that im-

ped migration of anadromous fish, including alewife, blueback herring and American eel, is an important ecological success. Recently designated a Wild and Scenic River, the Lower Musconetcong also contains trout production waters. This project is part of a larger NJ state effort to return the river to a more natural, productive state, including removing additional upstream dams.

The **New York CWRP** is expanding its outreach efforts with the



*NY CWRP members at a recent restoration project.*

creation of a new brochure that explains the Coastal America Partnership and how CWRP participates within it. Both past and present CWRP activities and accomplishments are highlighted. The brochure serves as an informational recruitment tool. To learn more about the NY CWRP, please visit <http://www.ny-cwrp.org/>.

## NORTHEAST

In northern New England, the **Maine CWRP** chapter is working with restoration partners on a feasibility study to determine how best to restore fish passage on the Sabattus River in the Androscoggin River watershed. The Mill Street Dam is the lowermost of five dams on the Sabattus. It no longer serves any hydrological purpose and completely blocks all fish passage to the rest of the river. With ME CWRP assistance, this project

will provide important information on how best to proceed with its removal. Fish passage at the dam is essential to efforts to restore alewife and American eel fisheries to the Sabbatus River.

**ME CWRP** is also supporting a feasibility study of the Hawk's Mill Dam on Mill Stream, in Albion, ME, to determine the optimal means for achieving fish passage. Since the dam's construction in 1833, alewives have been unable to reach 379 acres of historic habitat above the dam, in Lovejoy Pond. The Maine Department of Marine Resources had previously identified Lovejoy Pond as a high priority site and has been stocking alewives in the pond since 1992. With no funding source for that activity beyond 2012, ME CWRP has stepped up to help move the study forward to benefit threatened populations of Atlantic salmon, American eel, blueback herring and brook trout.

The Pushaw Lake Fishway project team in Orono, ME needed financial support to prepare engineering plans in order to secure regulatory permits to construct the fishway. The lake is a high priority alewife restoration project for the state of Maine so the **ME CWRP** provided financial assistance to move the effort forward. Eleven miles from the main stem of the Penobscot River, the lake's outlet dam is the only obstacle to alewives reaching nearly 5500 acres of historic habitat. This project is complementary to ongoing restoration efforts on the Penobscot River that also have ME CWRP support.

**The Army Corps of Engineers** (USACE) together with the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians is proposing to prepare a Saint John River trans-Border watershed management plan focusing on Atlantic salmon restoration.

The **ME CWRP** will support the local sponsors, i.e., the



## NORTHEAST, continued

Maliseet Indians. USACE will take the lead in the examination of ecological improvements that can benefit anadromous fisheries, including Atlantic salmon.



*Instream fish egg planting on the St. John's River*

With **ME CWRP** assistance, a habitat restoration project on Maine's Shorey Brook will restore it to high-level ecological function. In the summer of 2012, a dam will be removed and riparian wetland restored. Working cooperatively with Maine's Dept. of Transportation, which will replace a deteriorated culvert, the net effect of the project is to substantially restore continuity of aquatic habitat in approximately 4.3 miles of streams within the watershed, and to restore coastal and riparian wetland resources in the lower reach of the brook, benefiting blueback herring, rainbow smelt, American eel and brook trout.

On Flanders Stream, restoring connectivity to improve alewife access to historic spawning areas returns an important cultural and economic link to the Town of Sullivan, ME. A failing culvert and deteriorated 50 year old fish ladder seriously impact ecological function of the stream with negative ramifications for downstream coastal habitat as well. With matching funds provided by **ME CWRP**, construction of a rock fish ramp and arch culvert will proceed. Brook trout and American eel, as well as native sea lamprey will also benefit, providing additional food

sources for such species as ospreys and eagles.

The **Massachusetts CWRP** has provided funding for construction to improve tidal exchange for Freeman's Pond in Brewster, MA. This is an important restoration element as there is substantial freshwater runoff that enters the pond from a perennial stream and swamp system above the pond. This project also improves the resiliency of the marsh in response to increasing rates of sea level rise, because there is significant open space surrounding the marsh edge that provides notable opportunity for future marsh migration. The MA CWRP share of construction costs will help meet the 25% match required by the **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS)**. Other partners include **NOAA**, MA Department of Ecological Restoration, town of Brewster, and the Mass Bays Program.

The **New England Aquarium's** teen interns and educators participated in 74 community outreach and education programs at 73 dif-

ferent sites over the past summer. More than 2800 kids and over 800 adults were exposed to subject matter about tide pools, penguins, sharks and other marine animals. Student volunteers are also taking part in the *Live Blue Ambassadors* pilot program where they participate in field-based activities. With support from a grant from the **Ocean Project**, this program will be able to further their range of opportunities in 2012.

The New England Aquarium also hired 27 new teen interns to work in 9 different departments throughout the facility including 5 behind-the-scene positions during the



*A student volunteer teaches kids about marine animals in Boston, MA*

## Celebration of Pawtuxet Falls Dam Removal

On September 29, in Cranston, RI, the Pawtuxet Falls dam removal project team was honored during an event presided over by a lineup of speakers that included state, federal and local environmental leaders as well as restoration partners. RI Governor Lincoln Chaffee and U.S. Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse were also in attendance. The event concluded with a kayak run from the Pawtuxet River into Narragansett Bay—a new "Blue Ways" water trail made possible by removal of the dam.

The Pawtuxet River restoration project was led by the Pawtuxet River Authority and Narragansett Bay Estuary Program. It was made possible through a collaboration of over a dozen federal, state, local and private organizations which provided funding, technical assistance, and volunteer work. The **RI CWRP** contributed much needed non-federal match to federal funding. This project is one of many fish passage and aquatic habitat restorations supported by the CWRP program.



*Pawtuxet Falls dam removal team at award ceremony*

## NORTHEAST, continued

2011-2012 school years. The interns meet monthly to support the Aquarium, have fun and learn new science and ocean literacy concepts.

The **New Hampshire CWRP** recently provided an \$8,500 grant to the Cold River Advisory Committee to assist with the restoration of the Lower Warren Brook. The devastating flood of October 2005 caused severe adverse impacts to roughly 2.2 miles of Warren Brook in Alstead, NH. Previous studies revealed that the streambed had been badly scoured resulting in an unstable, incised channel with severely degraded aquatic and riparian habitat. The majority of the stream banks in the affected stream reach were ripped in 2007 under the **NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program**, which improved stream bank stability, but did little to improve aquatic or riparian habitats.

This restoration project is the third completed since 2005 toward the goal of restoring Warren Brook. Approximately 700' of the brook was restored in 2007 and about 900' of the brook was restored in 2010. The project is expected to have habitat, floodwater attenuation, and water quality benefits.



Lower Warren Brook after completed restoration efforts

## ALASKA

On November 16, 2011, **Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership** member AECOM presented one of the underwater camera systems purchased by the **National CWRP** in support of the Administration's Ocean Policy directives. The camera was awarded to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for use at the Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, based in Homer, Alaska. The presentation took place at the annual conference of Alaska's Resource Development Council.



Resurrection Bay team members at marine debris event

On February 9th a Coastal America Spirit Award was presented to the Resurrection Bay Conservation Alliance and **National Park Service** partnership for their removal of marine debris from the beaches of Kenai Fjords National Park. The award was presented at the plenary luncheon of the Alaska Forum on the Environment at the De-na'ina Center in Anchorage, AK. The **AKRIT** Chairs organized the recognition event and Region 10 Administrator Dennis McLerran served as the awarding official.

AKRIT and Regional Principals held their annual meeting that same afternoon.

## PACIFIC ISLANDS

The **Waikiki Aquarium** is working collaboratively with other Coastal America Partners to restore the coral reef in the bay in front of the Aquarium. With funding from **NOAA's Coastal Restoration Program**, the Waikiki Aquarium is partnering with University of Hawaii, volunteers, and local 5th and 6th graders to remove the invasive algae: *Acanthophora spicifera*, *Gracilaria salicornia* and *Avrainvillaea amadelph* and plant native species to restore the habitat. Once approved, a second phase of the project will include the Aquarium partnering with the Waikiki Development Association to propagate local corals at the Aquarium and use them to replant the reef. The Honolulu Zoo—the latest partner in this multiagency venture—will accept the collected algae and use it as compost.

The Waikiki Aquarium also welcomed KP2, a rescued Hawaiian monk seal as a permanent aquarium resident and ambassador for his species. KP2 was rescued by **NOAA** scientists and bottle fed when his mother deserted him three days after birth. Unfortunately, he suffers from poor eyesight owing to a cataract problem and has become too habituated to people to be released into the wild. Critically endangered, only 1,100 Hawaiian monk seals remain in the wild.



Endangered Hawaiian Monk Seal at Waikiki Aquarium



## CA 2011-2012 Ocean Art Contest Inspires In-Depth Ocean Education

With a deadline for submissions of December 20, 2011, the 2011-2012 Coastal America Ocean Art Contest has completed its first phase! The 21 participating Learning Centers are now each in the process of selecting one winner and up to two Honorable Mentions per age group from both the art and photography categories. Artwork must express one or more of the Seven Principles of Ocean Literacy and each piece had to be accompanied by a short essay that explains the principle.

Regional winners will be announced by March 1, and their artwork will be available for viewing on the Coastal America Facebook page. Regional art winners will then progress to the national contest, where judges include Sylvia Earle, Brian Skerry, Jim Toomey and Bob Wyland.

Winners of the national contest will

be announced by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Winning artwork will be displayed in prominent locations in Washington, DC during Capitol Hill's Ocean Week (CHOW), June 5-8, and be included in a special celebration of World Oceans Day on June 8th. Art contest winners will also be recognized at an award ceremony hosted at the National Geographic Society, on Thursday, June 7. For more information about the 2011-2012 Coastal America Art Contest, visit [www.coastalamerica.gov](http://www.coastalamerica.gov). Stay posted for special updates regarding the art contest by finding Coastal America on Facebook or following @Coastal\_America on Twitter.

Education directors from participating CELCs have reported that several teachers have used the 2011-2012 art contest to develop curriculums for the classroom about ocean literacy. In one case, Sharon Spencer, an art teacher



*Art work designed by one of Ms. Spencer's 6th grade students*

from Myrtle Grove Middle School in Wilmington, NC heard about the Contest, and turned it into a creative classroom opportunity for her students to learn about ocean stewardship. Learn more about how Ms. Spencer's innovative classroom efforts helped her students create their submissions by checking out the Coastal America blog: [www.coastalamerica.wordpress.com](http://www.coastalamerica.wordpress.com).

## Coastal Zone 2011 and the Shedd Aquarium

The Coastal America Partnership was proud to be a part of the 17<sup>th</sup> consecutive Coastal Zone 2011 Conference (CZ11) held July 17-21, 2011, in Chicago, Illinois. The Coastal Zone Conferences are biennial international symposiums on coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes issues and have been held since 1978. Since the Coastal America Partnership was formally announced twenty years ago at CZ 1991, it felt very appropriate to kick off our 20th anniversary with several events, panel sessions and outreach booths at CZ11. One of the highlights of the conference was a Family Day and Evening Reception at the [Shedd Aquarium](http://www.shedd.org), on July 20th.



*Interview of Coastal America partner Cameron Davis, Senior Advisor to the Administrator of the EPA, during CZ11 in Chicago, IL*



## CZ 2011, continued

The intent was to highlight the many activities of the Coastal America Learning Center Network and engage the public in a dialogue about restoring and protecting our ocean, coasts and Great Lakes. Organized by the Partnership and sponsored by the **Shedd Aquarium**, the **Sea Research Foundation**, the **Coastal America Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership** and the Coastal Zone 2011 Conference, the day was a great opportunity for attendees to learn about partners' initiatives. In an exciting innovation, Coastal America, the CZ11 Conference and the JASON project cooperated to produce a webcast, streamed live from the Aquarium! While the CZ conferences have traditionally been held so that professionals in the field of coastal zone management can gather and learn from one another, we thought we could capitalize on the wealth of expertise present and create a "teachable moment" for the public.

During the webcast, we talked to renowned scientists and expert planners to learn more about some of the challenges facing our oceans and coasts and how anyone can help protect these places we love. Our live panelists included not only experts well known in their field, but high school student delegates from our February 2011 Student Summit. Opening with an



*Interview with Dr. Jane Lubchenco,  
NOAA Administrator*

overview of the state of our ocean by Dr. Sylvia Earle, ocean explorer and Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the webcast focused on climate change, pollution problems and the issues surrounding living marine resources. Webcasting from the fabulous Shedd Aquarium with a wall of windows overlooking Lake Michigan, the hour long production heard from the experts, included the videos that our students had prepared for their Summit attendance, and encompassed live questions from the web audience, with responses from all of the panelists, including the student dele-

gates. Those student participants were drawn from three of our learning centers; the **National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium**, the **Seattle Aquarium** and of course, the **Shedd Aquarium**. They spoke about the implementation of their Student Summit inspired action plans including water monitoring projects and efforts to raise community awareness. Students from the Suquamish Tribe shared their project investigating how ocean acidification is affecting their Tribe economically, environmentally and culturally and what kind of activities they are creating to raise awareness of climate change. To view the recorded webcast, go to the Coastal America website, [www.coastalamerica.gov](http://www.coastalamerica.gov).

That busy day was capped off for CZ11 participants with a gala reception at the Shedd Aquarium. Conference participants enjoyed strolling leisurely through the Aquarium, while being feted with great local food and drink. Toward the end of the evening, Coastal America hosted a brief tribute and program to recognize the two decades of work of the Partnership. Speakers included representatives from each of the major partner groups including; the Learning Center Network - Ted Beattie Co-Chair of the Coastal America Learning Center Network and President of the Shedd Aquarium; the Corporate Partnership - Mr. Patrick Hester, Chair of the CWRP and Associate General Counsel for Spectra Energy's Northeast region; and the Federal Partnership - Eileen Sobock, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Fish and Wildlife and Parks at the United States Department of the Interior and Chair of the Ocean Resource Management Interagency Policy Committee. Just before the end of the reception, participants adjourned to the aquarium deck or to the windows facing out on Lake Michigan to enjoy a terrific fireworks show hosted by the city of Chicago.





## Comments on Plan are due by February 27th

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/oceans/implementationplan>



President Obama signs the National Ocean Policy on July 19, 2010

## National Ocean Policy Update

On January 12th the National Ocean Council released a draft National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan for public comment. The draft Plan describes more than 50 actions the federal government will take to improve the health of the ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes. For example, in an action directing agencies to Strengthen Existing Partnerships (Action 2, p. 37) our very own Corporate Partnership (CWRP) is used to illustrate the power of “leveraging partnerships.” Similar language recognizing the value of partnerships such as our CELC Network also appears in the Draft Plan.

## Want more Coastal America Partnership News?

### Check Out Our New Social Media Resources



In 2012, Coastal America celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! To share our partners many accomplishments as they happen, we’ve made significant strides increasing Coastal America’s online presence. We’re also using social media and video as outreach tools, and with the help of our partners we’re communicating more effectively both within the partnership and with the public.

The home page of the Coastal America website has been redesigned to highlight current events, information and important announcements. Since its makeover, the website has seen a significant uptick in website hits. Check out the changes at [www.coastalamerica.gov](http://www.coastalamerica.gov). Icons at the top of the page link you directly to our social media resources. We encourage you find us on Face-

book and/or follow us on Twitter: [@Coastal America](https://twitter.com/CoastalAmerica), for special access to Coastal America photos, and news updates!

A calendar has been added to the website as an organizational tool for all Coastal America partners’ activities. Information regarding meetings, deadlines and other special events is posted to promote collaboration among the partnership. Please email us your calendar entries.

From the website, viewers also have access to the Coastal America blog: [www.coastalamerica.wordpress.com](http://www.coastalamerica.wordpress.com). Short articles about Coastal America current events are posted and updated regularly on this site. Through our various social media outlets, viewers can interact with Coastal America and leave comments and provide feedback about the posts they are reading. Coastal America

has also ventured into the age of digital media and film with the creation of the Coastal America YouTube channel at

[www.youtube.com/user/CoastalAmerica](http://www.youtube.com/user/CoastalAmerica)

Be sure to watch the three minute video of Dr. Sylvia Earle promoting the Coastal America Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center Network. You can also see the North Carolina Aquarium delegates’ video, ‘We Sea Change,’ inspired by the third National Student Summit. We’ve got several film projects coming in 2012, including a number of short films about Marine Protected Areas, a joint project between the CELC Network and the North American Marine Protected Areas Network. Look for these to premiere at multiple special events, on June 8, World Ocean Day!

### Save the Date:

On Thursday, June 7, 2012, we will celebrate the winners of our Coastal America Student Ocean Art Contest. An evening reception at the National Geographic Society will feature the students, the nationally renowned contest judges and the premiere of 5 brief, original videos about the importance of marine protected areas. These videos are the result of collaboration between several of our Learning Centers and the North American Marine Protected Area Network. The Partnership has many other activities planned for Capitol Hill Ocean Week, June 4-8, and World Oceans Day, June 8 including simultaneous activities at many of our Learning Centers--check our website, for updates!

[www.coastalamerica.gov](http://www.coastalamerica.gov)

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Coastal America is a partnership among federal, state and local governments and private alliances to address environmental problems along our nation's coasts. The federal partners are: Executive Office of the President, Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor, State, Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration and The National Science Foundation.



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